

Approved Minutes
ICC Meeting, November 12, 2014
Easter Seals Crossroads

Present: Ann Arvidson, Melanie Brizzi, Donna Driscoll, Christina Furbee, Becky Haymond, Paul Hyslop, Beckie Minglin, Danny O'Neill, Shirley Payne, Cathy Robinson, Jamie Stormont-Smith, Jim Vento,

Absent: Dawn Downer, James Elicker, Jonathan Mattingly, Mary Ann West

Approval of August 20, 2014 Minutes

- Approved minutes

Part C Coordinator's Report

- **General updates**

First Steps has moved to an online system for entering/tracking data on all children and families. The SPOEs are all adjusting and it has been working well with a couple of hiccups (e.g., provider authorizations). The company, CSC, has rectified those issues and has provided Cathy with a list of issues for her review. The new web-based system, iSPOE, does allow for easier uploading/access of documents securely. It also allows quicker/easier means for providers to access authorizations. Becky noted positive elements in her cluster. Big improvement is security- all of the data now resides on a central database. Cathy noted that FSSA is very interested in establishing a common case management system across all departments. VR is using the new system now and FS is scheduled to be folded into that system in 2016.

IU/Early Childhood Center has recently completed its annual Quality Review work for this year. A survey evaluating the process will be distributed to all participating reviewers and SPOEs. Cathy noted some positive comments expressed by reviewers.

State has completed a new round of provider applications and agreements. These agreements list out updated roles and responsibilities. Agreements included requests for updating agency information on a regular basis (e.g., address, contact info, provider lists). Agencies should be receiving letters concerning the status of their agreements. If there are questions, agencies should contact Laci Bovard at FS. FS will also be sending information to SPOES if there are agencies that need information and support from them.

In Cathy's calls with OSEP concerning our state's development of the SSIP, one area of concern is soliciting family input. FS is now looking at how we can gather additional family input (e.g., INSOURCE). We were also looking at extending invitations to LPCC family members to ask them questions concerning their involvement.

- **Study of SPOE Work and Contract Allocations**

Cathy has had conversations with SPOEs over the past few months concerning their responsibilities and funding allocations. FS is initiating a rate study to look at this and establish a clear mechanism for assessing these costs/procedures. One issue has been that SPOEs have had to absorb budget cuts over the past years that may have put some services at risk. Cathy has reached out to other states to determine how other states fund services. One goal is to be transparent in the formula that funds services. The costs of the

Assessment Team will be included in the study, but unclear if they will be a part of the SPOE or the Provider Rate study.

- **Provider Rate Study**

Along with the SPOE rate study, the state determined the need for examining provider rates, too. There have been past rate cuts to providers that warrant further examination. It is the likely that the study will indicate the need for increased provider rates. The data will help FS to articulate what are true costs and be in a better position to advocate for appropriate levels of funding.

Question concerning the rate study – are we factoring in states with comparable models/demographics? For example, looking at the geographic/travel considerations for serving children in rural areas. Cathy is looking at individuals/entities with both the skills and familiarity with First Steps in Indiana so that they can move quickly in conducting this assessment. They have had conversations with Sequoia given their past experience and knowledge base. This study is still in the exploratory phase. Cathy stressed that it is important that SPOEs document their current policies and procedures to help inform the rate study consultant.

- **First Steps Training**

The state has made changes to the UTS Training System. A decision was made to approach training in a different way and was part of a review/evaluation of infrastructure conducted under its SSIP. The proposed training system is still in early development but it will look different in 2015.

Looking at getting feedback from providers to see what/where of training and professional development. It is likely that there will be mandatory trainings but not sure the form it will take. If January comes and individual providers are unsure of what to do, providers may contact Cathy's office. CSC will continue its role of credentialing providers.

UTS Core Trainings are available for registration until December 10 and web-based modules will need to be completed by December 15. Cathy noted that IDOE/Special Education currently has trainings that may be appropriate for FS and she is looking to more closely align those trainings. First Steps has traditionally stayed away from discipline-specific trainings and typically looks at early intervention content that is important and appropriate for all disciplines. The SSIP process will also help to guide training that will contribute to the child outcomes.

At this point in time, it is unclear how collaboration with other agencies will occur (e.g., Head Start, Child Care, Health). Cathy noted that she has met with Kristin Lawson (Health) and that there is a desire to look at how this collaboration can occur to address respective professional development needs.

Cathy noted that the number of credential points will most likely not change, but was unsure how they will be tracked at this time. Individuals can always proceed with credentialing if they have the training points.

Cathy is working with UTS-ProKids to figure out where and how new providers will be able to access initial training modules. For individuals who are enrolled and in the 60-day time

line, Cathy is looking at possibly hosting Indy or regional events to help. If the state is too late in getting the new process off the ground, individuals may request exemptions.

There will be a needs assessment survey that will be managed by David Brandon, FS Consultant. As state staff, they have begun formulating some perceived needs:

- Training for the Assessment Team members
- Training that addresses specialized/individual needs in regions

ICC Membership

- **Current Membership Status**

Current operating procedures require a minimum of four family members- Danny is currently the only family member on the ICC. Two families have been recruited at this time and information has been submitted to First Steps for final submission to the Governor's Office.

- **Orientation for New Members**

There has been discussion concerning looking at how new ICC members are oriented to the council. Copies of the information binder that was provided to families in the past were shared and discussed. Katie Potter, First Steps Consultant, also noted other resources, such as those from Cluster G that we can use to inform families. The idea of holding orientation meetings before and after ICC meetings was discussed, as well as the development of an online module to inform families.

A motion was proposed and carried unanimously that IU/Early Childhood Center draft an outline of an online orientation module for educating new members along with assignment of a mentor from the ICC. Michael Conn-Powers will work with the ICC Executive Committee on this.

State System Improvement Plan (SSIP)

- **FFY 2013 APR Draft Report**

Michael Conn-Powers shared a long document that included several analyses of the Federal Fiscal Year 2013 data on children and families who exited First Steps. This is the population and data that the state will need to submit in its upcoming Annual Performance Report. The analyses/report is attached.

Michael Conn-Powers, along with Janet Ballard and Katie Herron from IU/Early Childhood Center, set up and shared iPads with the data analyses document loaded on them and asked ICC members to sit with audience members to review the analyses and begin answering questions that the feds and national consulting agencies have suggested:

1. Are we serving some children more effectively?
2. Are we serving children from some families more effectively?
3. Are there trends over time in child outcomes
4. Do child outcomes differ across regions/programs?
5. Are there data quality issues

ICC members and audience attendees then met in small groups. After small groups, the ICC members shared the highlights of their small group discussions. What follows is a summary of the comments and questions that came out of this process:

- **Analyses of Outcomes and Emerging Foci for Improvement**

- There does appear to be differences in child outcomes based on race, particularly among children who are Black/African American. It was noted that a smaller proportion of this racial group experienced positive child and transition outcomes and were more likely to be withdrawn from First Steps services. There were several questions concerning this data:
 - African Americans do not show the same progress-
 - Is there a difference between children who exited after 6 months versus stay in program longer?
 - How does Indiana compare with other states?
 - Are there regional differences in Indiana, particularly where there are greater concentrations of Black/African American children?
 - Transition by race- African American families withdraw in greater proportion
 - Are there issues concerning provider safety, services, and provider availability in certain regions that might affect the quantity of services?
 - Chris Furbee, Special Education representative, noted that Part B/Special Ed is seeing the same issues as First Steps
 - Focus on race and the issue of cultural competence- how much do families want someone coming in that looks/talks like them? And if they don't have the person, how engaged are they?
 - It was suggested that further analyses look at Medical diagnosis by race and see if there are differences in outcomes. It was proposed that families who receive a diagnosis from their doctor may be more likely to participate and be engaged in First Steps as compared to families whose children were identified as developmentally delayed under First Steps. When families do not have a diagnoses, do they "treat" the other DD eligibility less seriously and less engaged
 - Do we have system capacity to provide service coordination for these families to access social/community resources and less provider specific?
 - It was further suggested that analyses look at both eligibility and diagnosis data since it appears that there are proportionally fewer children eligible due to a medical condition.
 - Look at census data to see if we are reaching proportional groups of children by race
- There also appears to be differences in child outcomes based on family income, with children from the poorest families less likely to experience positive child and transition outcomes. There were several questions and comments concerning this:
 - Indiana's Percent Poverty Level rate is calculated differently (adjusted income that includes deductions) than national calculations (gross income)- this needs to be taken into account when making national comparisons.
 - What are the types of services that children receive by race and by poverty (frequency of children and proportions)?

- Are there attendance issues and/or follow through challenges that might impact outcomes?
 - What changes happened between 2011 and 2014 to explain the spike in children exiting needing special education services
 - Perhaps correlated with assessment team, changes in assessment codes, providers went into agencies
 - Average age at exit and disaggregate by ages
 - Cost per child decreased during this time period
 - There were questions about the accuracy of data collections.
 - Is professional development needed that focuses on knowledge and skills concerning family culture, respect, and consistency that may promote family engagement? Are issues concerning respect for family culture contributing to families declining First Steps services?
 - There are also higher rates of declining First Steps among families. Is there a need for additional services to address these transition outcome differences?
 - It was suggested that further analyses look at differences between families who decline services versus families who fail to participate in services over time.
 - The frequency/intensity of services appears to be the same across children by family income
 - Additional analyses are needed that look at household makeup- single family, age of parent, etc., to help explain some of the differences.
- Finally, data analyses do highlight inconsistencies among clusters in terms of child outcome data, which suggest a data quality issue. The state has implemented new exit assessment procedures to address these concerns. It was noted that there is some concern that the new forms/procedures may not be implemented consistently, and there was a suggestion for consistent training for providers throughout the state.

Gathering Additional Input/Data to Inform our SSIP

- **Review/discuss draft family and provider interview protocols**

Michael Conn-Powers, Katie Herron, and Janet Ballard shared draft family interview and provider survey protocols for assessing family engagement. A sample of families would be interviewed throughout the state along with one of their current providers. ICC members were asked for their feedback. Feedback questions and comments included:

- Does this look only at one session since something might not arise or is not applicable? There may be a need to look at asking families about multiple sessions or sessions in general.
- Request question # 2, and ask about circumstances in general versus the immediate visit
- It was recommended that if families voice extensive concerns about their provider that they should be directed to speak with the provider agency director
- A survey given via text messaging might be more effective than a call from “the State”

For the provider survey:

- The question concerning if family asked questions may not get the richness of the types of questions asked
- The question concerning if the provider left written information may not clearly discern the types of information shared

General comments/feedback about both protocols in

- Should a more Likert scale be adopted for both protocols

- **Identify other information sources and activities**

As part of the SSIP process, the state does need to solicit input from a broad sample of providers and family members. Michael Conn-Powers noted that he has set up a meeting in Cluster B to meet with providers and family members to share the data analyses and solicit feedback in that region. Michael will contact the other clusters to see about setting up similar meetings across the state.

If anyone else has other suggestions for soliciting comments and feedback, please contact Michael at mipower@indiana.edu or 812-855-6508.

There were no formal public comments

Meeting was adjourned at 2:58